

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of the original Claim 2. Claim 5 has been amended to include the limitations of the original Claims 1, 3, and 4. Claim 14 has been amended to correct a typographical error wherein "form" has been replaced by "forming." Claim 2 has been cancelled.

1. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

The Office Action rejected Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9-13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Neukermans et al (U.S. 6,044,705) in view of Nishikawa et al (U.S. 5,579,148). Claims 2, 5, and 8 were objected to, wherein the Examiner stated that these claims would be allowable if re-written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The limitation in the original Claim 2 is herein added to Claim 1, and therefore, Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance. The Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claim 1.

Objected to Claim 5 is herein rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the original Claims 1, 3, and 4, and therefore Claim 5 is now in condition for allowance. The Applicants request that the Examiner withdraws the rejection of Claim 5.

Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9-13 all depend from Claim 1. Because Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance, these dependent claims are also in condition for allowance. The Applicants therefore request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9-13.

2. Objection to Claims 2, 5, and 8.

The Office Action objected to Claims 2, 5, and 8, wherein the Examiner stated that these claims would be allowable if re-written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 2 is herein cancelled. Claim 5 is herein re-written in independent form including all of the limitations of Claims 1, 3, and 4. Claim 8 depends from Claim 1, and Claim 1 is herein amended and is now in condition for

allowance. The Applicants therefore request that the Examiner withdraw the objections to Claims 5 and 8.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1 and 5 have been amended to overcome objections in the Office Action. Claim 14 is herein amended to correct a typographical error in the original application.

5 Applicants respectfully submits that the presently claimed invention is patentably distinct over the cited references; and Applicant therefore believes that the pending claims are novel and non-obvious in view of the references cited in the Office Action Mailed March 31, 2003, as required by 35 U.S.C. 102 and 35 U.S.C. 103. Therefore, Applicant believes the present invention is patentable as claimed. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks,
10 favorable consideration by the Examiner, withdrawal of the present rejections and objections, allowance of the pending claims (i.e., Claims 1, and 3-20), and passage of the present application to issuance are accordingly solicited. *The Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned for any reason which would advance the pending claims toward allowance.*

Respectfully submitted,



Kenneth L. Green
Reg. No. 44,724

KLG/rm

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LARIVIERE, GRUBMAN & PAYNE, LLP

Post Office Box 3140

Monterey, CA 93942

(831) 649-8800